

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

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DRAFTED BY AF/C:TRBUCHANAN&DLCARDWELL:JDP

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S/S - MR. SHANKLE

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O P 141801Z PEB 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGUI NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 037490

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, CT

SUBJECT: GOCAR ACCUSATIONS AGAINST US IN COUP ATTEMPT

REF: A) BANGUI 253

B) BANGUI 266

BANGUI FOR CHARGE

PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR QUANTON

1. DEPARTMENT IS VERY CONCERNED BY YOUR REPORTS SUGGESTING
BOKASSA MAY BE PLANNING TO BLAME US FOR LATEST ASSASSINA-
TION ATTEMPT. IF HE DOES SO, HIS MOTIVE PRESUMABLY WILL
BE EITHER EMOTIONAL BELIEF REFLECTING EFFECTIVE "DISIN-
FORMATION" EFFORT BY OUR ENEMIES IN CAR OR A PERSONAL

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DECISION THAT AN OPEN ATTACK ON US IS POLITICALLY USEFUL

TO HIM AT THIS TIME WHEN MODERATE STATES ARE VULNERABLE FOR THEIR STAND OPPOSING MPLA. SECOND MOTIVATION IS CLEARLY HARDER TO HANDLE THAN THE FIRST.

2. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, NOT TO OVER-REACT TO WHAT MAY BE SELF-SERVING REPORT BY FRENCH NATIONAL, OR TO REACT IN WAY WHICH SUGGESTS WE MAY HAVE GUILTY CONSCIENCE. WE HAVE ACCORDINGLY REJECTED THOUGHT OF HIGH-LEVEL MESSAGE

TO BOKASSA IN FAVOR OF PROBING APPROACH BY YOU TO TEST HIS ATTITUDES TOWARD US. IF YOU DETECT A REAL CHANGE IN ATMOSPHERE AND UNDERLYING HOSTILITY, E.G., REFUSAL TO SEE YOU, YOU SHOULD LET DEPARTMENT KNOW IMMEDIATELY AND WE WILL TRY TO INFLUENCE BOKASSA THROUGH MOBUTU.

3. YOU SHOULD ACCORDINGLY SEEK IMMEDIATE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BOKASSA, OSTENSIBLY FOR TOUR D'HORIZON IN VIEW OF IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF NEW US AMBASSADOR TO CAR AND ANGOLAN SITUATION. DURING REQUESTED MEETING YOU SHOULD MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO SEEK THIS APPOINTMENT IN CONNECTION WITH ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR QUANTON AND SITUATION IN ANGOLA.

B. WE ARE PLEASED THAT OUR RESPECTIVE AMBASSADORIAL POSTS IN BANGUI AND WASHINGTON ARE BEING FILLED. THE CURRENT EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS, BOTH OF WHOM ARE HIGHLY-QUALIFIED AND RESPECTED DIPLOMATS, IS SYMBOLIC OF THE STRONG TIES OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WHICH EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE ANTICIPATE THAT PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S FORTH-COMING VISIT TO THE US WILL SERVE TO STRENGTHEN THESE TIES.

C. US GOVERNMENT HAS NOTED WITH ADMIRATION HOW BOKASSA HAS STOOD FAST IN SUPPORT OF PRINCIPLE ON MANY ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE TO BOTH OUR COUNTRIES. ANGOLA IS MOST RECENT EXAMPLE. WE WANT PRESIDENT TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE IN NO WAY ABANDONED OUR DETERMINATION TO OBTAIN WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET/CUBAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE ON TERMS
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WHICH DISCOURAGE FUTURE ADVENTURES OF THIS KIND IN AFRICA. WHILE OUR HANDS ARE TIED BY CONGRESS AND WE CAN PROVIDE ONLY RELATIVELY LITTLE MORE MILITARY AID TO SAVIMBI, WE ARE DETERMINED TO BOLSTER THE POSITION OF OUR FRIENDS IN THE AREA OF ANGOLA. WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT DANGER OF SUBVERSION AGAINST ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA. BUT WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED AT EVIDENCE THAT OUR MUTUAL ENEMIES MAY TRY TO EXPLOIT ATMOSPHERE OF MILITARY VICTORY IN

ANGOLA TO WEAKEN STATES WHICH WERE OPPOSED TO MPLA RECOGNITION.

D. IT WOULD BE UNDERSTANDABLE THAT CAR, AS A LEADER OF MODERATE GROUP AND FRIEND OF THE US SHOULD BE PRIME TARGET FOR PRESSURE. GIVEN THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF PRESIDENT BOKASSA, BOTH WITHIN THE CAR AND IN AFRICA, HE BECOMES AN OBVIOUS TARGET FOR HOSTILE MANEUVERS. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE WAS SPONSORED BY THE LEFT, OR SIMPLY SOME DISSIDENT INDIVIDUALS. BUT IT IS

CLEAR THAT OUR ENEMIES ARE NOW TRYING TO USE THIS PLOT TO TURN THE PRESIDENT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES. IN THIS REGARD, WE ARE VERY DISTURBED BY REPORTS REACHING US FOLLOWING THE ARREST OF AN EMBASSY LOCAL, THAT THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY WAS ALLEGEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTEMPT ON THE PRESIDENT'S LIFE. AS PRESIDENT IS DOUBTLESS AWARE, AFRICA HAS BEEN SPECIAL TARGET FOR MANY YEARS OF EFFORTS, BY VAST COMMUNIST INTELLIGENCE "DISINFORMATION" SECTIONS TO PLANT OFTEN VERY CLEVER FABRICATIONS DESIGNED TO WORSEN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND ITS AFRICAN FRIENDS. WHILE WE DO NOT KNOW EXACT CONTENT OF CHARGES BEING LEVELLED AGAINST US, WHAT WE HAVE HEARD REEKS OF "DISINFORMATION" MANUEVER.

E. LOGICALLY, OF COURSE, CHARGE OF US INVOLVEMENT IS NONSENSE. US IS NOT SO STUPID AS TO TRY AND KILL ONE OF ITS CLOSEST FRIENDS IN AFRICA, AND MOST OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF COMMUNIST INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. WE CANNOT IMAGINE THAT PRESIDENT BOKASSA PLACES ANY CREDENCE IN SUCH STORIES, BUT THE WAY THE RUMOR IS SPREADING, REFLECTS A DETERMINED EFFORT TO HARM US/CAR RELATIONS. WE WOULD HOPE PRESIDENT WOULD PUT THESE RUMORS TO REST BEFORE ARRIVAL

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OF OUR AMBASSADOR.

4. SUGGEST YOU TAKE ALONG COPY OF EMBASSY'S RESPONSE TO FONMIN NOTE (REFTEL A) FOR PRESENTATION TO BOKASSA DURING MEETING.

5. PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR QUAINTON -- YOU SHOULD REMAIN IN PARIS, DELAYING YOUR ARRIVAL IN BANGUI; UNTIL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT. INGERSOLL

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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